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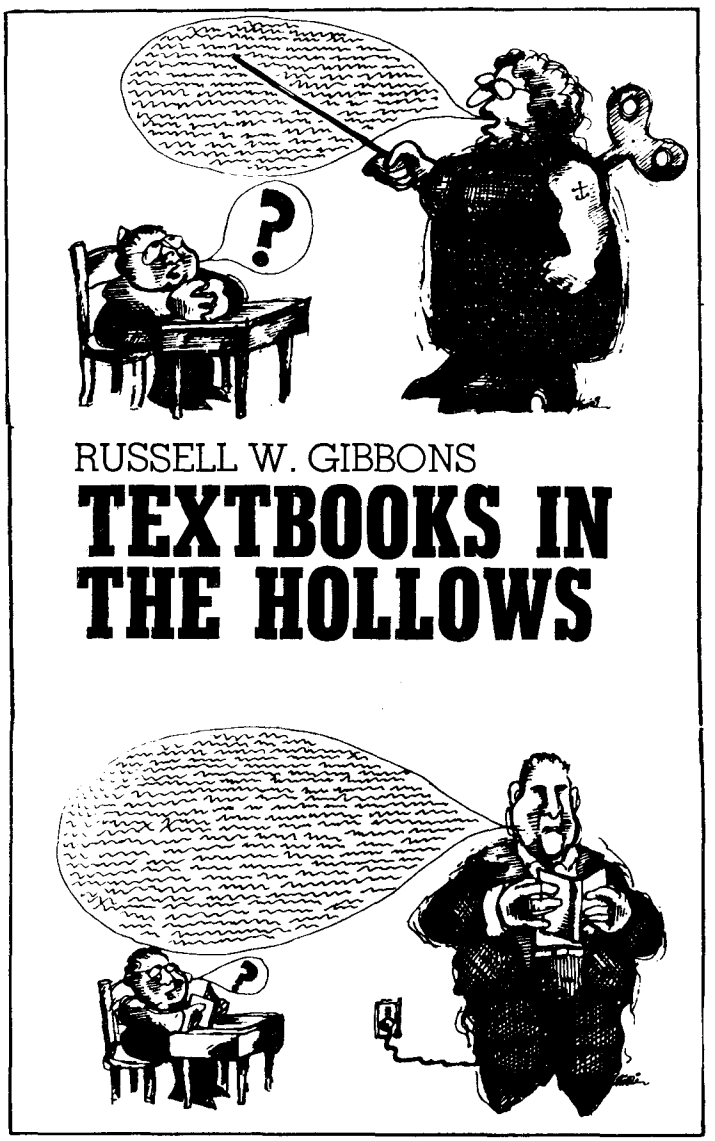

RUSSELL W. GIBBONS

TEXTBOOKS IN THE HOLLOWS

JOHN COONEY IRISH SECTARIANISM & RECONCILIATION
ABIGAIL McCARTHY THE FACT OF INTERDEPENDENCE
SISYPHUS MANY HAPPY RETURNS?

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NEWS & VIEWS

Boston and Cushing

Some fascinating clues to life in Boston and the thought of the late Cardinal Richard Cushing are contained in a confidential staff report to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights concerning Boston's school desegregation problems, a copy of which has come into the hands of the *Boston Globe*.

The report depicts Cushing as "dying with a broken heart" because he sensed that his leadership and influence on Boston's Catholics had not carried into the field of race relations. In another context he is said to have regretted building diocesan high schools. "That was one of my biggest mistakes," he is quoted.

The attributions originate with Neil V. Sullivan, former Massachusetts State Education Commissioner and now professor of urban education at California State College at Long Beach. Sullivan drew on a long, reflective conversation that he and a former aide, William J. Crowley, had with the cardinal on Boston's school problems before the cardinal's retirement in August 1970. Sullivan confirmed the accuracy of the report's quotations in a telephone interview with the *Globe*'s Muriel Cohen.

On the race question, Sullivan told the *Globe* that Cushing "felt his people carried with them deep feelings of prejudice and distrust toward black people, and they trusted to too great an extent the leadership of bigoted and narrow-minded parish priests."

With respect to schools, Sullivan said the cardinal agreed with his predictions that the parochial school system would be extinct in 1980. (In 1969, according to the *Globe*, there were 333 schools with some 135,000 students in the Boston archdiocese; this year the numbers are 256 schools and about 84,000 pupils.)

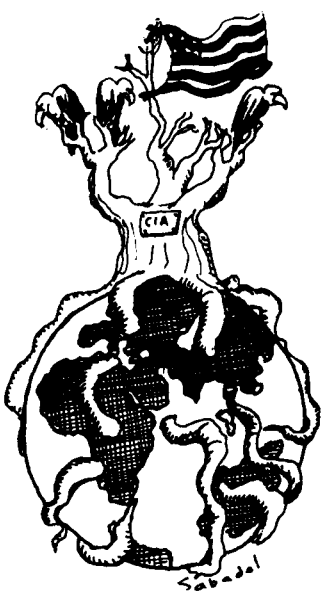
The report to the Commission spoke of a reduction of Church influence on Boston Catholics—a factor attributed to "unpopular liturgical reforms resented by some," as well as to the change in leadership from Cardinal Cushing ("He was seen as a Bostonian, an Irishman and of the people") to Cardinal Medeiros ("a prelate of Portuguese ancestry [as] many embittered or disillusioned Bostonians will quickly remind a visitor").

The report credited Medeiros with a "forthright stand for integration and against violence," adding that this is said to be resulting in "widespread boycotting at the collection plate."

Another Condemnation

Problems multiply for Catholic theologians in middle Europe. The latest in trouble: Jesuit Father Franz Schupp, who succeeded Karl Rahner in the chair of dogmatic theology at the University of Innsbruck.

He has been informed that the Congregation of the Faith at the Vatican has condemned certain positions of his dealing with the creation and other points of theology. Schupp, as a consequence, has resigned his chair, though he still holds his appointment as a professor.



Politique/LNS

The German press is comparing his case to that of Father Hans Küng and former Dominican Stephan Pfürtner [*Commonweal*, Aug. 23]. "In all three cases," said *Tiroler Tageszeitung*, "a scholar has fallen because his teaching has come into conflict with orthodox opinion and the Church has seen in that teaching a danger to itself as an institution. In the case of Pfürtner, it was problems with the notion of freedom; in the case of Küng, discussions over the infallibility of the Pope; in the case of Schupp . . . the meaning of Christian symbolic language and Christian symbolic actions."

According to *Tiroler Tageszeitung*, Schupp "is regarded as the most speculative spirit on the faculty" since Father Rahner. His theology was initially called into question in 1970, at which time he submitted his writings to the scrutiny of a panel of theologians that included Rahner. They were pronounced sound.

Distress Signal

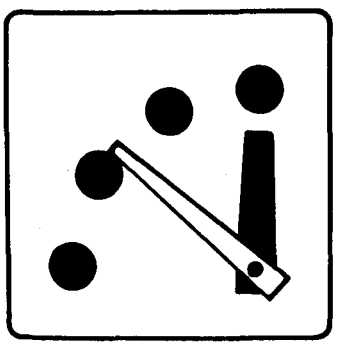
Another publication in trouble: *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*.

Founded 29 years ago as the organ of a group of scientists who had unleashed the atom in the cause of war and who wished to help harness it for peace, the *Bulletin* says it needs substantial contributions or pledges if it is to continue beyond the December issue.

Its problems: inflation, and a lack of capital with which to conduct the circulation-building programs that are the route to self-sufficiency.

Specifically, the *Bulletin* said it had to have $30,000 no later than the end of November for use as a revolving fund to finance subscription promotion, and $11,000 per quarter through 1975 to replace an anticipated operating deficit and restore personnel cuts that "threaten to reduce the quality of the magazine below an acceptable level."

Meanwhile, the magazine's famed Bulletin Clock stands at nine minutes to midnight. The masthead symbol is there as indication of the threat of nuclear doomsday hovering over mankind. . . . Now it also warns of the publication's doomsday.



Odds and Ends

—U.S. Ambassador to Italy John A. Volpe strenuously denies reports that he advocated early Italian elections and a change in the governing coalition from center-left to centrist. The Italian press, conscious of the Chile business, isn't buying. It has slapped on Volpe the Spanish name for coup. He's now "Ambassador Golpe."

—*Famiglia Mense*, the Italian Catholic monthly, published a special supplement aimed at penetrating the time and world of Jesus, while showing his relevance and importance in today's world. Its cover featured a Jesus in modern dress. Big brother was scandalized. *L'Osservatore Romano della Domenica*, the Vatican weekly, branded the "fashion-house" Jesus "equivocal and disconcerting . . . a real misfortune." (The cover portrayed Jesus as a long-haired, trim-bearded young man, dressed in white, wide-lapel suit, white shirt and dark tie. There was no Vatican flag on the lapel.)

—In *Publishers Weekly*, Vintage Books announces a 30 percent price increase (from $1.50 to $1.95) for a paperback by Robert Lekachman. The title: *Inflation*.

JOHN DEEDY

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CORRESPONDENCE

Seminary Systems

St. Meinrad, Ind.

To the Editors: In your fine editorial on "Women Priests" [Nov. 1] you engage at one point in an attack on "the old seminary system" and argue for "a process that would allow men and women of any age to take their dogmatic, moral and pastoral theology at a Catholic university." (One assumes that Scripture was omitted through an oversight.)

You may have missed the obituary of "the old seminary system," but present-day seminaries are considerably different and more enlightened than their predecessors. There has been a considerable strengthening and reform of seminaries in the past few years. Increasingly seminary faculties are pluralistic with mixed faculties. In our school there are Benedictines, diocesan priests and lay faculty (both men and women). The post-graduate degrees of the faculty are from a variety of institutions.

Your proposal for replacing the old system likewise has some problems. Seminary education involves more than attending courses at a Catholic university. Since seminaries are *professional* schools, it is highly questionable whether or not the courses of an undergraduate department of religion or a graduate school are simply interchangeable with those of a professional school. Each level has its distinct purposes and methods. There can be fruitful interaction, but they are not identical. As a professional program more is involved than simply course work. There is formation (which can be highly positive), supervised field work, internships, specialized course work in pastoral counseling, homiletics, etc. The local community has a right to expect professional training on the part of its priest.

The placement of seminaries on university campuses does not automatically ensure integration into the

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NO WIN

Meeting with the editors of the *New York Times* recently, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger expressed his belief that the world is "delicately poised" on the verge of a new historic era and that the next decade will be either "one of the great periods of human creativity or the beginning of extraordinary disarray." To avoid uncontrollable political, economic and social chaos in the world, he argued, we need a "visible and dramatic downturn in the arms race" and a new spirit among nations. "If we do not get a recognition of our interdependence, the Western civilization that we know is almost bound to disintegrate," Mr. Kissinger said.

We would not quarrel with Henry Kissinger on this, but what is the rest of the Ford Administration doing about the situation? In the critical national and international climate described by Mr. Kissinger, what do we see in Washington? Indecision, bumbling and timidity. Take inflation, which has us all by the throat. Where firm and decisive action is called for, the White House continues to put its faith in platitudes. The U.S. is following a policy of drift and indecision; Mr. Ford apparently thinks we will be saved by pushing a "WIN" button.

Or take the oil crisis. The only man in the Administration who consistently talked about the need for tough measures has been unceremoniously handed his hat (although there was only a Ford slap on the wrist for the head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff who told students that Jews control the banks and newspapers in this country—the familiar canard of classic anti-Semitism). There seems to be no question at all of introducing rationing before the tanks go bone dry, and the Administration lacks the nerve to do what so many experts urge: impose a stiff additional tax on every gallon of gas to reduce demand and provide extra revenue which could be used to cushion inflation for the aged and very poor. Instead the Administration only mumbles and fumbles.

Or take the recently concluded World Food Conference in Rome. The U.S. could have demonstrated some rightfulness to our claim to world leadership by taking a firm moral stance. Imagine, for instance, the galvanizing effect on the rest of the world if we had announced that we were cutting our military budget in half in order to help meet the world food crisis. And

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since the U.S. already can blow the world up ten times over if we are stupid enough to want to do so, would not such an announcement make the world a safer as well as a better place to live in? But instead of showing moral leadership, the United States sent a badly divided delegation, led by a Secretary of Agriculture who insists on mouthing outworn tags of laissez-faire philosophy. This country may in the end cooperate in meeting the world food crisis, but the Administration policy of putting our worst foot forward succeeded only in further tarnishing an already soiled national image.

Inflation—the oil crisis—the world food crisis: three examples but crucial ones and all badly managed. Like most Americans, we hoped for the best when Mr. Ford took over the Presidency. Now, 100 disappointing days later, we cannot conceal our disappointment. About all Mr. Ford seems sure of is that he likes to travel and that he is going to run again. But in an era that cries out for moral courage and intellectual leadership, as Mr. Kissinger suggested, the Ford Administration is proving itself uninspired, flabby and weak-kneed.

Irish Sectarianism And Reconciliation

Despite the many comments that have been made in the past few years about the sectarian nature of the conflict in Northern Ireland and despite the fact that talk of reconciliation in the North has become as axiomatic as in post-Nixon America, little detailed attention has been given to the Irish siamese twins: sectarianism and reconciliation.

It was to rectify this oversight that the 22nd Social Study Conference met recently in Dungarvan on the Co. Waterford coast to discuss the theme "Sectarianism: Roads to Reconciliation." The week-long conference was attended by 170 participants from both the North and South of Ireland. Discussions avoided the trap of being over-intellectual by the presence of a number of Northern working-class Catholics and Protestants. However, given the complexity of the Northern Irish situation, it is not surprising that the conference did not reach agreement on the extent to which sectarianism is at the heart of the present conflict.

As Professor Norman Gibson of the New University of Ulster noted in the closing address to the conference, there was some difference in emphasis on the importance or relevance of sectarianism to the conflict—or at least as a cause of the conflict. But as Professor Gibson also observed, there was more agreement that the Irish Churches, both Catholic and Protestant, have an important role to play in promoting greater understanding between the communities: in a word, reconciliation.

This is important, for it is clear that the ecumenical movement in Ireland faces the challenge of not just promoting theological understanding between church members but must also, as a former President of the Methodist Conference in Ireland, the Rev. Eric Gallagher, told the participants, declare that "their only political stance is a demand for social justice."

Dr. Gallagher, who is superintendent of the Belfast Central Mission, was speaking on the subject of "Roads to Reconciliation—a Protestant Contribution." He admitted that the Protestant Churches shared in the guilt for Irish sectarianism but emphasized that they only shared in that guilt and did not have a monopoly of it. Noting that the Protestant Churches of Northern Ireland were no longer, if they ever were, the churches of the working people and of young people, Dr. Gallagher maintained that the middle-class and middle-age structure of Protestantism had serious consequences for sectarianism. He explained: "Street leadership is frequently in the hands of anti-ecumenical and anti-ecclesiastical personnel. The Protestant Churches need, not only because of the biblical command to preach the Gospel, to reach young people and the workers. These people are too often easy prey for marauding bigots and propagators of sectarianism. Protestant church structures are too often geared to the participation of the affluent and retired than of the young and the wage-earner. This makes it easier for the latter to drop out and to be isolated."

Dr. Gallagher's conference "opposite number" was the Rev. James Lennon, a Northerner and head of the Irish Catholic Church's Research and Development Unit, who spoke on "Roads to Reconciliation—a Catholic Contribution." Father Lennon argued that the first step to reconciliation must be the recognition that the real and primary cause of the conflict is political and social, that the second step must be the positive and unqualified rejection of violence from whatever source, and the third is for each community to isolate and reject the men of violence who claim to represent them.

In effect Father Lennon presented what might be described as the official Northern Catholic view—which is to acknowledge that the Northern troubles have religious overtones, but that fundamentally the conflict has nothing to do with religion. If there is sectarianism, it is of political nature. Some support to this view was given by a political scientist from Queen's University, Belfast, Dr. John Whyte. After comparing Catholic-Protestant relations in Northern Ireland with other countries of mixed religions over the past 200 years, Dr. Whyte, who is the author of *Church and State in Modern Ireland*, concluded that the division in the North is not primarily sectarian at all, but one of national identity. National feeling, he said, was a more intractable force even than religious antagonism. If Protestant-Catholic conflicts have proved easier to assuage in

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other countries, it may be because in no other country (other than Northern Ireland) are they so closely overlaid by conflicts of nationality.

The contrast between life in the Republic and life in Northern Ireland was stressed by the speaker who attracted the largest audience, the Rev. Martin Smyth, a Belfast-based Presbyterian minister who is also the Imperial Grand Master of the Orange Order. Speaking on the subject, "A Protestant Looks at the Republic," Mr. Smyth said that authoritarian uniformity dominated southern Irish society. This authoritarianism stemmed from the intolerance of the Roman Catholic Church and was in evidence in other spheres of social life (for example, in opposing contraception, in the way the Gaelic language was imposed in schools, in the sectarian nature of education, in general fear of social non-conformity, and in the decline of the Protestant population).

Mr. Smyth also maintained that this authoritarian uniformity had produced severe cases of psychological inadequacy and personality disorders. A major evidence of this, he continued, was "the extent to which citizens of the Republic seek to drown their sorrows in alcohol." He added: "Many of us Ulster Protestants regard the Irish Republic as a very sick society; and we do not think just that people drink too much. We see it as a place from which too many people emerge with an anti-social Mafia-type attitude. Indeed, it has been a matter of speculation that it was only the chance death of certain Irish gang chiefs in Chicago in the early 1920s which caused what we now call the Mafia to be an Italian rather than an Irish phenomenon."

Looking to the future, Mr. Smyth said that if the Catholic Church moved in the direction of allowing greater individual freedom, encouraging lay participation, allowing a married clergy and accepting a more scriptural approach, then the Republic could "be a very different and much more attractive place in a generation or two, less narrowly sectarian, more tolerant, more prosperous, more happily at ease with itself, a nicer country to live next door to."

It was generally agreed that one of the ways to bring about better understanding was an integrated education system. However, there was little illusion that such a system would be easy to achieve and that it would solve community problems over-night.

If it did nothing else, the Dungarvan Conference helped to promote public discussion about the nature of sectarianism and on ways to bring about reconciliation. The events of the past five years have reflected badly on the Irish Churches as institutions capable of establishing community harmony. The Dungarvan conference has shown that there is more willingness for change in the Irish Churches than is often acknowledged by Irish Church leaders.

JOHN COONEY

(*John Cooney,* Commonweal's *regular correspondent in Ireland, is on the staff of the* Irish Times.)

To Our Readers

First the bad news. *Commonweal* is becoming a biweekly rather than a weekly. Our subscriptions and advertising are holding up well, but inflation is squeezing us hard. The price of the paper on which the magazine is printed—a big item in our budget—has more than doubled in the past year. At this writing we have just received notice of a substantial increase in our printing costs, another major factor, and the same story can be repeated on other crucial items, as in your own business and household budgets. During the just finished 50th Anniversary Year, the generosity of our readers has got us through such fiscal crises, but we cannot appeal for this additional support every year. We must, therefore, cut costs substantially, and the only way we have been able to devise is to join the ranks of such magazines as the *National Review*, *Christianity & Crisis*, the *New Leader*, the *Saturday Review/World* and other well-known biweeklies. This change in frequency of publication will take place immediately, which means, therefore, that there will be no issue of the magazine dated December 13 and that the issue to be dated December 20 will be the first of the biweekly *Commonweal.*

And now the good news. The new biweekly will be a bigger, improved *Commonweal.* The economy of less frequent publication will allow us to add extra pages to make a fatter issue. Indeed, when one takes into account that we already publish on a biweekly schedule during the summer, the new rate of publication will involve only a 20 percent reduction in the yearly total number of pages. To strengthen the up-front section we will be adding more regular reports from around the United States and abroad. The back of the magazine will be expanded, with more articles on cultural and literary affairs and more book reviews. Along with our regular columns by Michael Novak, Abigail McCarthy, Colin L. Westerbeck, Jr., and Saul Maloff, we will have more frequent contributions from Michael Murray, Mark Taylor and Frank Getlein; and every issue will contain a Washington report by the widely admired Sisyphus. Much of the time there will even be a dab of color on the cover just to brighten things up, and there will be other innovations. In short, stick with us, and we will give you a *Commonweal* bigger and better than ever—and with more time between issues to digest the contents.

THE EDITORS

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THE FACT OF INTERDEPENDENCE

ABIGAIL McCARTHY

How will we ever sort it out? We have so often done harm by doing what we thought was good. At every national conference we face bitter accusations from third world delegates. "For our part, we hope that the thousands of foreign experts under whose advice we suffocate in the Third World, will not now be joined by their female counterparts in social anthropology, however well-intentioned. . . ." said a woman speaker from Sri Lanka this summer.

Among her listeners were Americans darkly suspicious of all our efforts at aid in the past—disposed to see in them only disguises for "economic imperialism." Since all human effort is mixed in motive, there is truth in the allegation. But it is equally true that we were motivated almost as much by a desire to share the good as we saw the good. We are almost incurably missionary in spirit, no matter how suspect the word *missionary* today. Why have our efforts gone so "aft agley"?

The sub-Sahara is one current and very painful example. Climatologists tell us that the conditions there did not result from a climate shift alone (they are in dispute about whether there is indeed a climate shift). We of the developed nations sank deep wells and taught the agricultural arts to the nomadic people of the region. A rise in population and new food dependence patterns followed. It is at least arguable that a sparse nomadic population would have adapted in the long drought and had a much higher rate of survival.

The whole problem of world hunger has been compounded by our pattern of aid. In the past most Americans *thought* that we were sending food abroad at some sacrifice, and the majority of them approved if we can judge by election results. In addition millions of Americans gave to church- and charity-sponsored food assistance programs. Now we have come to the decidedly uncomfortable knowledge that we were disposing of our surpluses and helping our own economy in the process. And doing long-range harm:

"Over the years developing nations became extremely dependent on food assistance. Between 1954 and 1969, free food or commodities received on easy credit terms accounted for more than 30 percent of total food imports of developing countries." (Dan Morgan in the Washington *Post*). We cannot shift abruptly to technical assistance now.

Political aid is even more questionable.

The tragedy of Chile shows how very complex the problem can become, no matter how needed or well-intentioned our intrusion into the affairs of another country seemed at any given point. Granted, our first presence in Chile was that of American business exploiting and developing the copper mines. (And, as always in Latin America, doing so in cooperation with Chileans.) But Chile was a country of sound democratic institutions and our interdependence grew in many ways. So it was that our first anti-Allende effort took a form that might seem acceptable to many Americans even today.

It was an avowed purpose of the Alliance for Progress that the United States should cooperate with every effort for democracy and independence in Latin America. Advisers to the Administration in the early 1960s thought they saw in the rise of the Christian Democratic party a third force between the repressive and the exploitative on one hand, and the Communists on the other. In Chile this was shaping up as a three-way struggle among the forces of President Allesandri, either Edouardo Frei or Radomiro Tomic of the Christian Democrats and Salvador Allende.

I have written at length of this elsewhere (*Private Faces/Public Places*, 1972) but the events can be summarized quickly: Observers at the world conference of Christian Democrats in Santiago were asked to meet with Frei and Tomic (who was to oppose Allende in a later election after being ambassador to the United States). Then it was arranged for Frei and the leading Christian Democrat of South America, Rafael Caldera of Venezuela, to come to Washington as speakers at a conference arranged just for that purpose. At the same time meetings were arranged with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, interested journalists, and finally, very quietly, with the President himself. Thereafter, very substantial help was poured into Frei's campaign—possibly through the channels of the CIA and international labor, I do not know. Frei won. Allende lost.

Certainly, one can hazard the thought that it might have been better to let events take their course. Suppose Allende had won. He was a Chilean of the Chileans. The Chileans had a right to choose him. Things might have developed very differenly in his administration at that time; polarization was not as extreme; Castroism and terrorism were not so strong on the continent; the opposition was not as intense. He might not have been pushed to the choices he made in his recent administration. This is mere speculation, but legitimate to consider.

A sadder thought is this: Eduardo Frei might very well have won on his own. According to people who have talked to him recently that is his own conviction. He is a truly principled, intellectual and charismatic leader with a sense of history and committed to a better life for all Chileans. Frei, suc-

(Continued on page 247)

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TEXTBOOKS IN THE HOLLOWS

RUSSELL W. GIBBONS

A cultural counter-revolution that outrages Eastern sensibilities

Even Hillbillies have constitutional rights.
(sign carried by a picket in Kanawha County, West Va.)

"They (the textbooks) are immoral, anti-Christian and anti-religious . . . Christians should pray to God to strike dead the three (board of education members) who voted to purchase them."
—Rev. Charles Quigly, an anti-textbook leader

"It doesn't make sense. They're shooting people because they don't want people to see violence in books."
—Randy Summers, a Dupont high school student in the Kanawha County system

Those familiar with the literature of social anthropology know that there are two North American cultural groups who have been studied and probed and analyzed and lived with by psychologists to the point that many of them have now developed a sophisticated cynicism toward visiting professionals. They are, of course, Canada's northernmost Eskimo tribes and West Virginia's mountain people.

The Eskimos have diminished both in numbers and cultural identity since the intrusion of the agents of trading-post civilization, with recent generations experiencing for the first time suicide, homicide, alcoholism and psychological dislocation, phenomena unknown to their grandparents. Now, because Canada's Department of Indian Affairs can make such decisions for its Eskimo wards, they have called a halt to the graduate students with tape recorders and note pads tucked in their parkas.

"Every tribe has its anthropologist or sociologist," said a Department wit. "How many more papers do we need to tell us that they are an alienated people, unable to accept the ways of a society which presided at their cultural destruction?" Bureaucratic paternalism on occasion can surface with good common sense.

However, there is no such bureaucratic counterpart for the mountain folk of West Virginia. They used to be called hillbillies, a term long considered derogatory but now acceptable in an evolution of self-pride comparable to the black pride movement. Cultural and ethnic analogy being a dangerous thing, one can only speculate if future shock in the state's mountains is similar to that being experienced in the far north latitudes.

What is apparent in recent months in the Mountain State is a widespread cultural counter-revolution which outrages Eastern sensibilities and attitudes toward education, religion and community values. For West Virginia's textbook controversy, whose initial ingredients appeared to be issues involving primitive efforts at censorship and book-banning, has blown into a full-scale eruption of frustrations against a worldly culture imposed in an area literally a world apart from the rest of the country.

Anyone who has visited the state cannot ignore the fact that geography and the land have had a profound effect upon the people: the mountains and the narrow, twisting roads that wind through them give it a sense of isolation and distance from the rest of the country. The creeks which flow through the state and near which have been built the literally hundreds of mining camps and towns and hamlets for well over a century have been

RUSSELL W. GIBBONS, *a long-time contributor on labor affairs, has also appeared in* The Nation, The New Leader, Dissent, *and other journals.*

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home to several generations of mountaineers or hillbillies or "creekers."

It is the heart of Appalachia, and it is one part of the country whose people reject any regional compartmentalization: they are not Easterners, Midwesterners—and especially not Southerns. It is a state of contradictions: created because of its loyalty to a Republican President, it was carved from the slave-owning aristocracy which became the heartland of the rebel Confederacy. Yet since in the Union, it has known a disproportionate amount of economic hardship, political turmoil and social discontent. Said Mother Jones, the miners' angel who understood and helped its wretched poor more than any succession of governors: "When I get to heaven I'll know I am there when I see it isn't West Virginia!" Those who know country music also know West Virginia—as a land of bloody strikes, natural and man-made disasters, coal company towns, company stores and as a stronghold of fundamental religion.

It is a land of unquestioned beauty, but one whose landscape has been ravaged by the absentee power brokers who have owned the mines and much of the state.

The irony in the current struggle in the schools around the capitol of Charleston may be that the same people who in past years have been critical of this out-of-state economic power have in another sector imposed a set of values which is just as foreign to the hollows and its creekers as Chase Manhattan or AT&T. In years past, when oppressive capital overextended itself in the mines, a raw-boned unionism was not hesitant about taking up arms and shutting down the collieries.

Taken in perspective, it should not be too surprising that the controversy over textbooks has long passed the point of reasonable people in disagreement. It has, in fact, grown from unreasonable oratory and polemics at meetings of the Kanawha County board of education to demonstrations and counter-demonstrations, each enlisting their children from pre-schoolers to the high school students most affected. It has evolved into passions and emotions, with threats common. Shots have been fired, dynamite has been fused to schoolhouse doors, a school has been firebombed, at times one quarter of the county school population has boycotted classes and several protesters have been jailed for violating injunctions.

Attempts at reconciliation and resolution of the controversy have only sparked further protests. After the board announced on Nov. 9 that it was ordering virtually all of a group of disputed textbooks back into the schools, parents and protesters returned to the streets and announced plans for a large-scale "ban-the-books rally" in Charleston in late November. "I would rather see my daughter in a funeral home" than in school exposed to the texts, declared a leader of the anti-textbook crusade, which has virtually shattered the public school system in Kanawha county the past three months.

* * *

The focus of the anti-textbook crusade are the hollows of the upper Kanawha County, an expanse of narrow roads and creeks which twist across the mountains and through communities of insulbrick and stucco dwellings. It is largely rural, yet the economy is coal and the coal camps which have followed the fortunes of the industry are the places where most of the county's creekers reside.

A graduate student or any other visitor need not have a tape recorder to construct the obvious: the people are poor. They have a heritage of hard times and yet with it proud convictions about their own self-worth and beliefs. Their beliefs are fundamentalist religion and the strength of their union, and both have produced a collective spirit which has been best expressed in the familiar, yet effective phrase: "Shut it down!"

And shut them down, they did. Coal mines in Kanawha and Boone counties were shut for several days after school opened in September, and only intervention by Arnold Miller, president of the Mine Workers, reopened them with an uneasy agreement. And for a while the 44,500-pupil school system in the county was itself shut down after days of reduced attendance.

Those who find it difficult to understand why coal miners would jeopardize their jobs at the threshold of a nationwide strike threat must dig deeper with the social anthropologists: "Miners go into the ground and listen for God every day they work," says Carl Glatt, the former head of the state's Human Rights Commission. "The one man who lives through a mine disaster when the others die comes out a fully recognized preacher, called by Jesus' holy name. And if he says the books are against the Lord's teachings—well, that's where we're at."

Yet it is not a preacher ordained by the fires of a mine cave-in who has given direction to the anti-textbook drive, but an attractive, articulate wife of a Baptist preacher who is a member of the county board of education. Alice Moore called by the Charleston *Gazette* the "dark-eyed patron saint of the anti-textbook crusade," has kept the board in a continued turmoil since last June, when the controversial texts came to the attention of fundamentalist parents.

She has given spiritual, if not formal direction, to the Concerned Citizens of Kanawha County, the leading anti-textbook group. Three or four of the self-ordained funda-

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mentalist preachers have provided leadership to the shock troops, and one of them, Charles Quigly, asked his flock to "pray to God to strike dead" the three board of education members who voted to purchase the controversial texts. And while allegation of "anarchism" in the books has been one of the repeated charges by the protesters, the violence which has resulted has moved the county toward anarchy. Rocks and bottles have been tossed at school buses, smashing windows and blocking highways. Half a dozen school buildings have been firebombed in addition to the board of education building. Several men have been shot and others beaten in connection with the controversy, and Sheriff's deputies in riot gear have been present when protest rallies and school meetings have been held.

Mrs. Moore has regretted the violence and the anarchist tactics used by some of the anti-textbook hardliners, but still maintains that the "anti-Christian" and "filthy" texts must go. "You have got to hold onto the principles that you believe in," she says.

Those principles are well understood and uncomplicated in most of Kanawha County outside of urban Charleston. God, family and blood ties are strong. And it was predictable to anyone familiar with the cultural history of this part of West Virginia that objections would have been forthcoming on the selection of anthologies which were part of the English "Language Arts" approved by the board's Textbook Selection Committee earlier this year.

Most of the texts comply with a requirement of the state which provide that textbooks illustrate both blacks and whites in "real life" situations. The disputed books are already in use in many of the nation's larger school systems, but a central part of the controversy has been the elimination of parent members from the selection committee. The subsequent approval of the books was made by a committee consisting entirely of professionals, possibly a fatal decision for the school district's tranquillity.

"It seems to me that if parent participation had continued in Kanawha, it is unlikely the situation would ever have become so aggravated," comments Carl Marburger, a onetime Commissioner of Education in the neighboring state of Maryland, whose eastern shore has sociological makeups with some similarities. "Disputed textbooks are probably harmless at worst, whatever their effectiveness as teaching materials . . . (but) there was an astonishing insensitivity to local cultural values by the public school system, from the board down to the classroom teachers."

* * *

At Cabin Creek, in the county's lower valley, the local delivery woman for the state's largest circulation newspaper, the Charleston *Gazette*, has quit. "She's either afraid that her home will get shot up or she hates us as much as everyone else in that end of the valley," says a *Gazette* reporter. The newspaper, long an urbane voice for integration and against the Vietnam war, has come down heavy on the anti-textbookers, publishing in full some of the offensive selections.

The anthologies do present another world outside—and far apart from—Cabin Creek, Summit Ridge and Pinch, West Va. Blacks and "street people" who use language easily understood by children of the inner-city of New York or Chicago or Los Angeles populate the stories and poems which present the core of the controversy. Opponents say, for instance, that a supplementary book for junior and senior high school readers titled "Jump Rope Jingles and Other Useful Rhymes" teaches "disrespect for law and order" because of a poem which tells of a man arrested ("He took me around the corner/ and he rang a little bell./ Along came a police car/ and he took me to my cell.")

The chairman of the textbook committee calls the books "an excellent selection . . . a comprehensive program for a complex county in which we are dealing with

'is Luck Is Down

The textbook controversy in West Virginia's Kanawha County, a largely rural, coal camp and farmland expanse which twists through the state's west-central mountains, centers upon a "Communicating" series for both elementary and secondary grades, published by the D.C. Heath Co., Houghton Mifflin Co. and other recognized educational publishers. One which has drawn especially vigorous protest at rallies of the "anti-textbookers" is this poem by Roger McGough from *Dialogues and Monologues:*

MOTHER, THERE'S A STRANGE MAN WAITING AT THE DOOR

Mother,
There's a strange man waiting at the door
With the familiar sort of face you feel you've seen before.
Says his name is Jesus and can we give 'im 'alf a crown
Says 'es run out of miracles and now 'is luck is down.
Yes I think 'e is a foreigner Egyptian or a Jew
Oh aye and that reminds me
'Ed like some water too.
Well, shall I give 'im what 'e wants Or send 'im on his way
All right, I'll give 'im sixpence
Say that's all we've got today
And I'll forget about the water.
I suppose it's a little bit mean,
But 'onest 'es filthy dirty
You don't know where 'es been.

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all kinds of students. They have criticized them for being anti-American, but I'd call them extremely patriotic because they represent all types of Americans." Yet can there be a "comprehensive" set of anything—much less values—for a region which incorporates Charleston, the state's second largest city, a capital and a generally affluent community by West Virginia standards, together with a rural population living in substandard housing literally at the bottom of the hollows, without water or sanitary sewers, sidewalks and conventional shopping facilities?

Charleston and its immediate Appalachian environs constitute one of the starkest examples of the "other America" as far removed as any from the neon-sign prosperity of Wattenburg's *Real America* of 1974. Marburger, the enlightened educator-administrator, places the issue into reality with a question: "What would happen," he asks after discussing the West Virginia controversy, "if the Newark school board decided to issue 'Little Black Sambo' as a third grade reader?"

Hillbilly jokes are in at cocktail parties in Charleston just as Polish jokes still make the circuit in New York and Washington parties. And understandably, the mountain people resent them just as do their more sophisticated ethnic counterparts in the cities, and there is evidence that Kanawha County may be but one tip of a protest iceberg which could emerge in any part of the nation.

In Bedford County, Virginia, school system supervisors have directed the board of education to remove "undesirable" books from the schools. Possibly awaiting the outcome of the West Virginia conflict, the board has delayed action. A textbook review committee in Texas, embroiled in a similar controversy, last month passed over one of the series of books under fire in Kanawha County. And an Ohio school district, sensing future trouble, decided that approval of textbooks must include an appointment of a board made up of teachers and administrators to back-up their selection.

"What's wrong with the books I was taught with in school?" asked a lady protesting on the capitol steps with her youngsters carrying small American flags. "They was all right. They got me through, didn't they? Why are they always trying to do something different?" Change, then, may be the real devil to the hollows, even if speakers at protest rallies have railed against "humanistic conspiracies."

"Even hillbillies have constitutional rights" declared another sign carried at the capitol protest. Yet so do the students in the Kanawha system and they remain the serious victims of the protest. Many who had plans for college next year see the creekers' crusade as a knife into those hopes. Others point out the obvious contradiction between protests over alleged disrespect for the law and institutions in books and the actual practice of violence and contempt of law by the anti-textbookers.

A Charleston high school student, Jeff Butler, offered that "you hear and see worse things walking down the hallways" and other students, both in urban Charleston and in some of the rural schools of the district, have petitioned for a resumption with normal classes and a full curriculum with the disputed textbooks. But the creekers are adamant, vowing that they will keep their children out of school and continue the protest until all of the offending volumes are withdrawn.

There are no certainties in the West Virginia dispute, but if the image of Bible Belt bigots attempting to ban books is legitimate, then so also should be the allegations of elitist educational administrators making sweeping decisions of the "we know best" school. The rot which took over the Nixon Administration barrel was simply an elitist paternalism which had no faith in the wisdom of the people, and which presumed to make decisions for them, often secretive and largely arbitrary.

Thinking liberals should find it just as offensive that the parents of Cabin Creek, West Virginia, are denied any say in the school curriculum of their children, just as they have reacted with sympathy toward the view that the parents of Bedford-Stuyvesant should be involved in decision-making for *their* children. Mindless rednecks, after all, should be no less intolerable than ostentatious administrators.

CLEMEWELL YOUNG

FOURTH OF JULY AT THE SHORE

Rockets spurt and shatter night.
We sit barefoot near the bay
Where fireflies vibrate with light.

Fronds of green, blue, red and white
Fall in ratatat-array
As rockets spurt and shatter night.

Flicking switches in their flight
Through the saw-toothed salt marsh hay,
Fireflies vibrate with light.

Cannonading with delight.
Shadow fathers dart away.
Rockets spurt and shatter night.

Feeding, courting, stolid. slight,
Like peasants plying through the fray,
Fireflies vibrate with light.

See—the final grand display!
Whose the victory today?
Rockets spurt and shatter night.
Fireflies vibrate with light.

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MANY HAPPY RETURNS?

The voters have taken the Republican party to the woodshed for a thorough political spanking. Forty-two incumbents in the Congress were defeated in the November elections—all were Republicans, except four.

Two matters of national concern reinforced local considerations that led to their defeats. One was anger over the attempted Watergtae coup d'état, whose dimensions have not yet been fully revealed; the second, economic bad times.

The Watergate conspiracy against civilian government disturbed Americans more than politicians realized and incumbent Republican members of Congress received the brunt of the electoral punishment. Staunchest supporters of Richard Nixon were among those defeated for re-election—among these, Reps. Dennis of Indiana and Mayne and Sherle of Iowa.

As for the economy, the Ford Administration itself has finally been forced to acknowledge that rising unemployment, shrinking industrial production, and increasing inventories of such items as unsold new cars suggest times are not the best. Compounding these difficulties are rising prices—sugar selling for 18 cents a pound retail 11 months ago now costs about 55 cents, and the price of a basket of farm-grown food for a family of four has risen $197 this year.

Democrats greeted the election returns with prideful smiles. Rep. Carl Albert, the weakest Speaker of the House of Representatives in 40 years, said the Democratic victories suggested a "mandate." Because House Democrats under his nominal leadership don't have a program for anything, it is difficult to understand what the "mandate" is for. Senators-elect began dreaming of achieving the Presidential nomination of their party two years from now, even before they were sworn in as Senators.

Democrats overlook or ignore the fact that the voters turned out Republicans for reasons that had nothing to do with Democrats—Watergate and the economy. The voting was against Republicans, not in favor of Democrats. Moreover, the voter turn-out was the lowest in 32 years—38 percent nationally. Third, Democrats are not on guard against the day when Americans realize that change is not equivalent to improvement. Democrats in Congress or in the nation, through their national party, have no economic program. And, institutionally, Congress is a more skilled nay-sayer, a spoiler, a compromiser, a ratifier of Presidential proposals than it is an originating agent of constructive national policy, particularly when it comes to resuscitating an ailing economy. In the face of hard times, each member of Congress, 535 of them, is more likely to react like the corner grocery store—defending its own interests, however legitimate, but lacking the breadth to act on its own initiative in the interest of the sum of the parts.

The incoming Congress is a mixed bag. Some Democrats elected to the House were "throw-aways," that is, many received their party's nomination because prospects at the time for election were not favorable. Therefore, the more capable decided to stand aside and let the other guys run. The other guys ran and now find themselves in Congress. Not much can be expected of them, even if the Democratic party leadership in the House were capable of enacting a constructive legislation program. One recalls the dozens of Democrats elected in 1964—elected not for themselves, but in reaction to the Presidential candidacy of Republican Senator Goldwater. Most of these new Democrats were defeated for re-election two years later at the next Congressional election. And few of them, frankly, were ever missed—or heard from again—their contribution being simply the defeat of entrenched retrospective incumbents.

The Democrats in Congress do have the numerical strength to enact a coherent economic program that will reverse the price spirals and put jobless Americans back to work. The obvious building blocks are wage-price controls, tax-reform and public-service employment. But George Meany, who holds the strings on some of the lib-lab Democrats, opposes wage and price controls. Unless we go to war with Argentina as a result of his night-club escapade, Representative Mills, chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, appears to remain strong enough to quash substantive tax reform for another two years, although there will be efforts at the organizational caucus of House Democrats in December to weaken his control. Enough Democrats, particularly newer ones, remain skeptical of the value of public-service employment to impair passage of any massive program designed to absorb the unemployed.

It may be premature to draw a definitive political profile of the newly elected members of Congress. But, there are clues. Significantly, newly elected Democratic liberals appear to differ from those coming through the door in the 1940s, '50s and '60s. Their campaigns indicate they are far less reflexively internationalist and, more specifically, they are more instinctively anti-Soviet than both their newly elected Republican counterparts and the Johnson and Nixon/Ford Administrations. In addition, they appear less confident in the efficacy of

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government-run programs of assistance. Overall, too, less predictable than the Humphreys and Mondales.

Nevertheless, there will be a report card issued by the voters on the Democrats, even though they speak with many voices. Their record, or the perception of their legislative record, will help determine which political party holds the White House in 1977.

In this connection, President Ford in mid-November sent word through his Press Secretary that he intends to seek a term as President in his own right. We'll see about that. The barons of the Congressional committees were beginning to refer to the President as if he were a "lame-duck," when he was only 100 days in office. The President, well-acquainted with the wily ways of these chieftains of which he was once one, was probably obliged to say something along these lines in terms of his political future, even if he hadn't quite made up his mind. Moreover, having been a leader of a minority party, his statement was a natural defensive maneuver. In addition, the President, a conservative, probably hopes that such an announcement will accomplish two other purposes:

1)—bolster the sagging support for Nelson Rockefeller, his beleaguered Vice Presidential nominee, whom Republican conservatives don't like;

2)—make it more difficult for Ronald Reagan to establish a staging area for his efforts to become the 1976 Republican Presidential nominee.

To these ends, Ford will probably be successful. But what intrudes itself more forcefully with each major Presidential action—or inaction—is whether Gerald R. Ford of Grand Rapids isn't over his head. Again through his Press Secretary, the President released what was described as a "notable number of achievements . . . a tone of stability and continuity in foreign policy, openness and candor in domestic affairs, cooperation and reasonableness in (his) dealings with Congress." Meeting with leaders of countries, the "economic summit" (in fact a piece of window-dressing), and a continuation of Secretary Kissinger's peripatetic foreign-policy missions were identified as specific achievements. At this rate, the President will next restore Calvin Coolidge's after-lunch nap to the White House schedule.

Somehow, the government, both executive and legislative branches, seems demoralized as well as ineffective. Economic power surpasses their political authority. It is one thing to strum unrealistically on a people's aspirations; it is another for political authority to play chopsticks when a concerto is called for.

Moreover, members of the Ford Cabinet seem to be in business for themselves—Butz, the Scrooge, at Rome; Kissinger, wherever he pitches camp; and Morton, pushing the oil companies' fortunes. There is no prospect of increasing energy supplies for at least 10 years, yet except for WIN buttons and other exhortatory declamations, there is no effort to insist on a policy of fair-shares conservation—i.e., rationing. Herblock, the cartoonist, is wearing a NIM button these days—"WIN" upside down and reversed—signifying, he says, "Nothing In Mind."

If the next two years become government by drift, Americans' interest in voting may dwindle further. On the other hand federal office-holders operating as a national coalition of conscience with moral baggage and open-faced idealism would reverse this downward trend.

SISYPHUS

BOOKS

Critics' Choices for Christmas

THOMAS E. CRONIN

As we begin to move into our Third Century as a nation we are witnessing, understandably enough, a considerable amount of nostalgia about America and a more meaningful searching reappraisal of how it all began. Several of this year's more significant books deal with the nature of leadership now and when our country began, and with the problems that yet await us.

Two of this year's more outstanding books are biographies of two men who helped found and share this first new nation. James Thomas Flexner's one-volume biography of George Washington, *Washington—The Indispensable Man* (Little, Brown, $12.50), is a stunning performance. Flexner is the author of a previously published prize-winning four-volume study of Washington. This new effort is much more than a condensation; it is a lucidly written new appraisal and doubtless the best single volume available on this central political architect. No one who begins reading it will want to set it aside. And indeed upon completion many a reader will want to repair to the larger four-volume version. Through examining Washington and his struggles during the revolution, his inspiration at the Constitutional Convention and his trials as President, the reader is clearly reminded of the long ordeal America experienced before nationhood was truly achieved.

Jefferson The President: Second Term (Little, Brown, $14.50) by the noted Jefferson biographer Dumas Malone offers us a splendid companion volume. Here too the reader is taken back to the nation's early trials, and to a figure whose numerous contributions to our political heritage are impossible to measure. In many respects

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Jefferson was the father of our political party system. His inventions and contributions to higher education are legend. Still, perhaps most important was his contribution to statecraft and the art of presidential leadership during a period of political upheaval and testing. Like Washington he provided sober, sensible symbolic leadership to the new nation. Unlike Washington, however, he was willing to forge political coalitions, aggressively to formulate public policy and personally to bridge the gap between executive and legislative branches. Malone's book is sometimes dry, but always detailed in scholarship and rich in interpretation. This is the fifth and penultimate volume in what will clearly be the classic Jefferson series.

Reconsiderations of national leadership are also found in three provocative and original examinations of the presidency and constitutional requirements. Michael Novak's *Choosing Our King* (Macmillan, $7.95) is one of the freshest and most insightful books on the presidency to be written in a long while. Novak assesses the role of the American president in the context of civil religious values and treats the "king's" subjects as much as the king. While some of his reforms may appear lame or ill-advised, Novak is at his best when dissecting America's self-understanding and the rich symbolic role the president plays. He is concerned, as few before him have been, with the liturgy of leadership, suggesting that the election of a president is an almost religious task, and that like it or not the human heart ceaselessly yearns for royalty of a kind, especially one that will liberate the best in us.

Rexford G. Tugwell's mammoth *The Emerging Constitution* (Harper's, $20) is the culmination of ten years of research and fifty years of reflection and experience from a zealous believer in reform and reconstitution. Tugwell takes seriously Jefferson's admonition —that every generation would benefit from a political regeneration, or even revolution, of its own. He contends that the doctrine of self-restraint, only implicit in the Constitution but essential to its smooth funcioning, has been badly shattered by all branches, and furthermore, that the nation has been living with an increasingly outmoded, baroque Constitution. The need, Tugwell says, is to begin anew; and he lays out the reasoning and the logic for a new constitution. His is a top-to-bottom revision, a landmark book. His readers will surely be provoked, stimulated and probably angered. For Tugwell is a visionary, a dreamer of dreams, a firm believer in national planning.

Few will be satisfied with the Tugwell end product. He himself views it as but the point of departure for a nation that would live up to George Washington's 1787 urging: "Let us raise a standard to which the wise and the honest can repair."

The Imperial Presidency (Houghton Mifflin, $10), by Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. now available in paperbound editions, ranks as one of the most sensible interpretations of the modern presidential condition. This is must reading for anyone who wants to partake of the national debates about curbing presidential autocracy. Schlesinger's volume is both history and advocacy. Vividly written, salient for timely reappraisals, it also is balanced in its view of what can be done. Schlesinger has been a prize-winning celebrator of presidential power as exercised by Jackson, F. D. Roosevelt and John F. Kennedy and thus it is only with some candid soul-searching that he comes to a sober semi-revisionist view of the promise of the American presidency. The book is at its best when tracing the awesome growth of the president's foreign policy powers in the nuclear era.

This past year has certainly ushered in a reawakened appreciation of our nation's precarious position in an imminent age of scarcity. Three notable new books that deserve a close reading in this light come to different conclusions but each in its own peculiar way is likely to shape national debates as we approach the 1976 elections. Ben J. Wattenberg's *The Real America* (Doubleday, $10) presents a very upbeat progress report of how well America is doing—compared to where we have come from. As his close friend Richard Scammon warns, Wattenberg's style is "happily pugnacious." Still, Wattenberg is a skillful analyst of census data, political polls and any other available data supporting his thesis that Americans are coping, and indeed coping rather well. Many readers will welcome Wattenberg's analysis as soothing music to the ear, especially coming as it does in a period of national crisis of confidence and recession. But it merits scrutiny, if only as a marked contrast to the Heilbroner and Brown books to which we shall now turn.

Robert Heilbroner's *An Inquiry Into Human Prospect* (Norton, $5.95 cloth, $2.25 paper) is a brilliant, penetrating and devastating assessment of where we are, and where we are going. Heilbroner is an economic historian by profession, and his book takes the form of an extended essay. It has already occasioned debates across the nation. Heilbroner predicts that the circle of overpopulation and food shortages can no longer be solved by industrial development, because of the scarcity of material resources and the effects of energy consumption on the environment. He thus foresees an emerging repression by governments everywhere. He offers a trenchant and persuasively bitter series of trend analyses that will leave just about every reader depressed and perhaps annoyed as well. For he offers little hope and indeed does not spend much time discussing reforms or recommendations. The book is short, and sometimes difficult, but essential reading.

Somewhat more hopeful, but equally blunt, is Lester R. Brown's *In The Human Interest* (Norton $6.95). Brown's book also centers on the question of human survival in an age of overpopulation and scarce resources. He catalogues the trends superbly and his book has already become must reading for participants at world food and population conferences this past year. Unlike Heilbroner, however, Brown devotes substantial attention to what might be done, what the options are, what immediate steps should be taken both by America and on a world order.

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Brown is a leading authority on the world food shortage problem, and his book helps make intelligible this often opaque international crisis. In the process he persuades us of the compelling need for radical departures in national policy.

ANNE FREMANTLE

Power, this year, seems to be where it's at—abuse of power by Presidents, use of power by the CIA to murder other people's presidents, oil-power, food power, population (people) power. So my choices are all about power, used, misused, or abused. So many of the books dealing with power require physical and financial power in their readers just to buy & lift them: 1245 pages in *The Power Broker* by Robert A. Caro (Knopf, $17.95), 469 pages in *Sex and Power in History* by Amaury de Riencourt (McKay, $12.95), 769 pages in *Aldous Huxley* by Sybille Bedford (Knopf-Harper, $15)

Mr. Caro's story of Robert Moses is prefaced by a quote from Sophocles "One must wait until evening to see how splendid the day has been" and indeed it is a classic Greek story of a great idealist, a brilliant, beautiful human being, so changed by power that the man who, at Yale, wished to dedicate his life to improving the condition of the working classes, dispossessed of their homes 250,000 poor to make his highways and close to half a million to build Lincoln Center, the United Nations, and various urban renewal projects. Mr. Caro has shown the inexorable *hubris* that changed Robert Moses from the reformer who wrote the Reconstruction Commission report of 1919 into the man who refused his only brother a photo of their dead mother and who tried to wreck the Tunnel Authority because he couldn't take it over. How right Lord Acton was: "All power corrupts," etc.

And yet, and yet . . . Amaury de Riencourt traces male-female history from the male victory over the early mother-goddess to the synthesis produced by Christianity which "by making allies of women, without giving them any clerical authority, ensured its temporal triumph." He rightly emphasizes the tremendous importance of the A.D. 451 (third) ecumenical Council at Chalcedon which ruled that "the Virgin Mary was indeed *Theotokos* the mother of God" (not just of Christ's human body). Though "Byzantine women behaved with forceful assurance" their Latin sisters never enjoyed, on the whole woman-power, paramount there, could not withstand the masculine Arab and barbarian (Crusaders) western attacks. Reading de Riencourt, one is inclined to agree with the late W. H. Auden, that woman-power is on the whole less nefarious than the phallic toy swords, spears, guns, nuclear bombs with which men punctuate *their* power.

Sybille Bedford, who knew Aldous Huxley for more than forty years, proves how wrong Lord Acton can be. Power over "what cometh out of a man"—words, actions—can be wholly good. She shows, in her superb biography, how Aldous moved from being a great writer to becoming a saint. And this "becoming" was wrought by overcoming his physical problems—near-blindness—and his "natural appetites"—a Jansenist disgust, a patrician contempt. It is a moving story: at the end Huxley's house and manuscripts were burned, and he died of a painful cancer. But spiritually, all was well. "One must find a way of living in time without being completely swallowed up in time," he wrote. He had.

Another—perhaps not so different—way to power is described in Carlos Castaneda's fourth book about his Mexican guru, Don Juan; *Tales of Power* (Simon & Schuster, $7.95). Here power is freedom from the slavery imposed on us by our fellowmen. "Freedom is expensive, but the price is not impossible," Don Juan says. This marvelous pilgrimage "from the unreal to the real" (as the Upanishads put it) teaches us that the only way to escape the corruption of power is to abandon it. Since what the Gospel says about life, is just as true about power.

And to end on a less preachy note: Marchette Chute's *Rhymes about us* (E. P. Dutton, $4.95) illustrated by the author, proves that some (blessed) people can "become as little children," and enchant both grownups and children too.

JOHN HEIDENRY

After some reflection I have found it impossible to come up with recommendations for six or seven books published during the year. In the first place I am not up on literature in any special field and on the whole I am only a hundredth as well read as I ought to be. Moreover, I am skeptical that in any one year there are more than a dozen good books published; and if that is so, it is unlikely anyone but a daily book reviewer will know about them; and it is not improbable he may misjudge the value of a third of them. Thus to fulfill my duty and serve my conscience I have come up with a different sort of list, to which some readers with cause may object. Of course, I would not defend any of these selections to my last breath; and many of the categories themselves are more fanciful than real. Still I do *recommend* all of the books below and I think they compare favorably with any bestseller list ever compiled.

1. *Best English literary polemicist.* Terms: something rather more than a journeyman reviewer and less than an Oxford scholar. Fresh style, inordinate range of topics, untoppable wit, improbable enthusiasms. Brigid Brophy has taken over this British institution from G.B.S. Unfortunately her *Don't Never Forget* is out of print; but check it out next Library Week.

2. *Best American literary polemicist.* Kenneth Rexroth's *Assays* (New Directions, $2.25) is a good introduction to the most iconoclastic and encyclopedic man of letters since anybody. In comparison Mencken looks like a rube (which he was) and Trilling becomes rather overlong in making his point.

3. *Best novel about England.* There will always be an English literature so

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long as there are people like E. M. Forster to talk about class sensibility and "who will inherit England?" in *Howards End* (Vintage, $1.95), whose closest rivals are all the other books he wrote.

4. *Best novel about America.* Two great novels, both *sui generis*, not only share honors but take them in another category as well: *Best American satire.* The seven years between Vladimir Nabokov's *Lolita* (Berkley, $1.25) and *Pale Fire* (Berkley, $1.25) comprise the golden age of American literature.

5. *Best English satire.* I am being careless of centuries here but I doubt if even Swift wrote anything better than Evelyn Waugh's *A Handful of Dust* (Dell, $1.45). In his old age Waugh likely thought Swift's "modest proposal" perfectly reasonable.

6. *Best essayist.* What one is looking for is not just information or a pleasing style but in addition a resourcefulness as much in the breadth and depth of the writer's humanity as in learning. Though Montaigne and Browne were more exalted, William Hazlitt is a better friend. Try *Selected Essays* (Random House, $10.00).

7. *Best prose translation into English.* Though somewhat inaccurate, there is nothing to compare with the antique cadences of John Florio's englishing of Montaigne (*Essays*, 3 vols.; Dutton, $3.50 each).

8. *Best unread recent novel.* All of us look forward to reading something. From hearsay, bookstore browsing, and the few reviews I have read the new novel I most want to read is Anthony Burgess' *Napoleon Symphony* (Knopf, $7.95). However, the other things of his I have read I find gross. Beware of disappointment.

9. *Best living minor poet.* Laurie Lee is a throwback to England's nature poets and if you ever visit the Cotswolds you will see why. Read *As I Walked Out One Midsummer Morning* (Atheneum, $5.95).

10. *Best dead minor poet.* Rupert Brooke had no genius but he was almost as pure a soul as Keats. Nor are his poems merely chauvinist or campy; they show considerable mastery over form and only Hopkins (still unpublished) had gone farther in technical experimentation. *Collected Poems* (Dodd, Mead, $3.95).

11. *Best curiosity book.* Did you know Spinoza used to relax by setting spiders to fight each other? Isaac D'Israeli in *Curiosities of Literature* (Dover, $1.75) tells you why. Only for bibliophiles and people who never get tired of Borges.

12. *Best book I have read in 1974.* Of the fifty or so new books I bought or received this year only one was outstanding: A. O. J. Cockshut's *Truth to Life: The Art of Biography in the Nineteenth Century* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, $7.50), which is not so dull as it sounds. Anyone interested in belles-lettres will like it.

13. *Best novel in last ten years.* Gabriel Garcia Marquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (Avon, $1.50) is also the best novel in the Spanish language since *Don Quixote*, in case there are any doubts.

14. *Best poem of the 20th century after Yeats and Eliot.* Using "after" here in the sense of "besides those of." That most underpraised of great writers, Ford Madox Ford, is in danger of becoming a cult writer. Bail him out by buying *Buckshee* (Pym-Randall, about $5), where you can look up "L'Oubli—, Temps de Sécheresse."

15. *Best book about Dublin after "Ulysses."* J. P. Donleavy's *The Ginger Man* (Berkley, $1.25) is not a small masterpiece but a memorable first read. Second half is prolix and the reader should fortify himself with a little Guinness.

16. *Best novella ever written:* Ronald Firbank's *Concerning the Eccentricities of Cardinal Pirelli* is among the *Five Novels* published by New Directions ($7.50). Edmund Wilson and nearly everyone else thought him a leftover from the Nineties. Opening scene is about the baptism of a baby German shepherd.

17. *Best English prose stylist of all time.* Bacon had no need to write Shakespeare's plays. In his essays you will find language put to every use for which it is made; with few exaggerations or lapses. *Essays* (Oxford University Press, $2.25).

18. *Best bathroom book of all time.* Where else to read in snatches about the original of Tolstoy's Natasha, Alexander Woollcott, Thackeray's letters, or Baudelaire than in Edmund Wilson's *Classics and Commercials* and *Shores of Light* (Noonday, $2.65 and $2.95). If you have a second bathroom try Eric Bentley's *The Importance of Scrutiny* (New York University Press, $2.25).

19. *Best surprise for self and children.* Allen Ginsberg singing *Songs of Innocence and Experience* by William Blake (MGM Records, about $6). Let down your hair.

20. *Best children's fairy tale.* No, it is not *The Little Prince*, which is a book for people who do not read books; but Oscar Wilde's *The Selfish Giant.* My edition is out of print but probably contained in *The Happy Prince & Other Stories* (Dutton, $4.50).

21. *Best Russian novel after "War and Peace."* Pasternak's *Dr. Zhivago* (New American Library, $1.50) is noble, theatrical, poetic, more spiritual than Tolstoy. People who like *The Little Prince* will prefer Dostoevski.

22. *Best reference work.* Fowler's *Modern English Usage* (Oxford University Press, $4.95). Though he allows the split infinitive in some instances, Fowler would make us all literate. Each entry is a miniature essay written with great charm and skill.

23. *Best short story.* Apart from the fact that I have never read a short story I have liked completely, Conrad's two long short stories "Prince Roman" and "The Duel" seem to me the best. The former can be found in the *Portable Conrad* (Vintage, $1.95). You find the other.

24. *Best biography after Boswell.* A new standard in readability, comprehensiveness, and artistry has been set by Richard Ellmann in his life of *James Joyce* (Oxford University Press, $4.95). Ernest Jones' *Freud* is a close second.

25. *Best autobiography after Mills. The Journals of John Woolman* (Citadel, $2.95) is one of the treasures of American literature and much too little

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known. He may shame you into pacifism, vegetarianism, and not paying your taxes.

26. *Best minor French novelist.* None of Bernanos' books is now in print in English except for his dreariest novel, *Diary of a Country Priest.* Though his politics were hateful the author of *Joy* and *Under the Sun of Satan* was perhaps also the best Catholic novelist ever.

This total package comes to about $100 plus a few library fines. If it does not contain all one needs to know on earth, it does give a pretty good estimation of what is out there in the dark. Missing is *Best anthology of poetry.* Like Detroit cars the recent ones are too big and have too many optional extras.

THOMAS POWERS

I don't know which was the worthiest book published in 1974 but the one which gave me more pleasure than any other was Aldren A. Watson's *Country Furniture* (Crowell, $7.50). It is a simple fact that furniture used to be made a good deal better than it is now, which has always puzzled me. Modern woodworking tools—routers, joiners, radial arm saws, lathes and the like—are marvels of exactitude. Jobs which used to take hours, like cutting dovetails or turning chair legs, can now be done much more quickly, with a lower tolerance for error, and yet furniture made today is heavier, uglier and less carefully put together than it used to be.

This is no secret, of course, and books about antique furniture, which appear in the pre-Christmas season with the predictability of a fact of nature, tend to be breathless with admiration for early American craftsmanship. The trouble with such effusions is that they are vague. Craftsmanship is not (or at least not only) the result of primitive republican virtue but a matter of technique, materials and tools. The great strength of Watson's book is that it both shows and tells you how early furniture makers went about their work.

Long, beautifully illustrated sections reveal in detail precisely how the simplest sort of tools were used to cut out hidden dovetails, build a Windsor chair, carve a shell design on a drawer front, cut fluting on a pilaster, or reeding on a table leg. For anyone interested in furniture or in woodworking, *Country Furniture* is more than just useful; it is a revelation. It is, in truth, about as good as a book can be. The feeling it inspires is not easy nostalgia, but genuine regret. Americans of the 18th and early 19th centuries had something, some feel for life as well as for things, which is gone and will not return. The world has turned too far.

Henry Adams was crippled all his life by that sense of regret, of having been educated in and for a time which could not survive, or even much inform, the sudden expansion of American commerce and boundaries after the Civil War. His autobiography, *The Education of Henry Adams,* is one of those books everyone is supposed to read in college, but I never did. When Houghton Mifflin published a new edition this year, with an introduction and notes by Ernest Samuels ($10), I picked it up (at least partly because it is printed and bound so well, other arts which are in decline) and discovered that Adams knew a great many things which lesser writers have struggled for words to say not half so well ever since.

He understood that there was too much power loose in the country, too uncontrolled, like a cannon which has broken free of its moorings and is careening about the deck of a ship, smashing wildly everything in its path. Nothing in the thought or social life of the 18th century, when the nation was born and its institutions established, could prepare men for the epidemic of power released by the 19th, when every aspect of commercial life seemed to shoot suddenly forward. Adams felt he had been educated for a world with intellectual and spiritual moorings; the world he found had none and he sensed a dark potentiality in the wild acceleration of history. In his predictions about the future he is often eerily right, and even when he is wrong, he is eerily wrong, as when he says, struggling free of his pessimism for a moment at the end, that perhaps things will not turn out so badly, that perhaps the world in 1938, the centenary of his birth, will be a world in which power is controlled and human values ascendant. One thinks of his choice of a year, and is not hopeful.

If he had chosen, instead, 1974, would Adams' final effort at optimism strike a less painful note? Power is hardly controlled, and yet the resignation of Nixon seems to promise a check to the growth of Presidential power, at least. Much of the credit for his unmaking must go to Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, who tell how they did it in *All the President's Men* (Simon & Schuster, $8.95). Despite its title this is not a book about Nixon's agents but an account of how Woodward and Bernstein first suspected, and then proved, that there was more to the break-in at the Democratic National Committee headquarters than the "third-rate burglary" described by Ronald Ziegler.

At the heart of *All the President's Men* is a mystery. Back in June, 1972, at the time of the break-in, no one I knew really believed that the men captured inside the Watergate Hotel had been working on their own, or much doubted who they must have been working for, and yet there was a general conviction that those actually responsible would get away with it. In an odd way people had been disheartened and disillusioned to the point of political coma. They felt, in a word, helpless against power. Even Woodward and Bernstein seem to have proceeded only one step at a time, tracing the flow of Nixon campaign money, for example, without allowing themselves to think, for longer than you would suspect, that the trail would lead where it did. Perhaps their success ought to allow us to hope that the spell of power has been broken.

Robert Stone would not agree. The pessimism he expresses in his second novel, *Dog Soldiers* (Houghton Mifflin, $8.95), is of the darker Henry Adams

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sort. The story he tells is simple: a failed writer in Vietnam buys two kilos of heroin and gives it to a friend in the Navy to deliver to his wife in California. Waiting for the friend, and for the heroin, are two psychotic, homosexual killers who are working for a corrupt agent of an unnamed federal bureau. The rest of the book is a splendidly suspenseful contest for possession of the heroin. Of course, there is more to it than that.

Stone feels that going to war in Vietnam was, for the United States, more than a little like doing heroin. At first there is an exhilarating high which makes things seem reassuringly simple. After awhile the exhilaration wears off and the complications set in but by that time it is too late. One thing leads to another, the unthinkable becomes commonplace, and the only defense against the horror is not to care. *Dog Soldiers* is the best book so far about the spiritually corrupting effect on the United States of the war it fought in Vietnam. The power unleashed there, almost absently, and certainly indifferently, was one of those things, Stone feels, which you can't take back. His pessimism is dark indeed. Henry Adams hoped, although his reason denied, that things might still change. Stone, in clean, relentless prose, says, simply, no: it is too late.

NATHAN SCOTT, JR.

I find myself so untouched by Matthew Arnold's passion for ranking books and authors (in his case, in accordance with some ineffable he called "high seriousness") that I feel even a little defeated by the invitation to sift and weigh only the material I've paid attention to over past year. So my first impulse is to think that my wanting to dodge the effort is prompted by something like a principled position. And it surely is in part, for I am persuaded, however much a sort of literary barometrics may be the specialty of the kind of commentator the English speak of as a Bookman, that "bookmanship" dose not represent anything resembling

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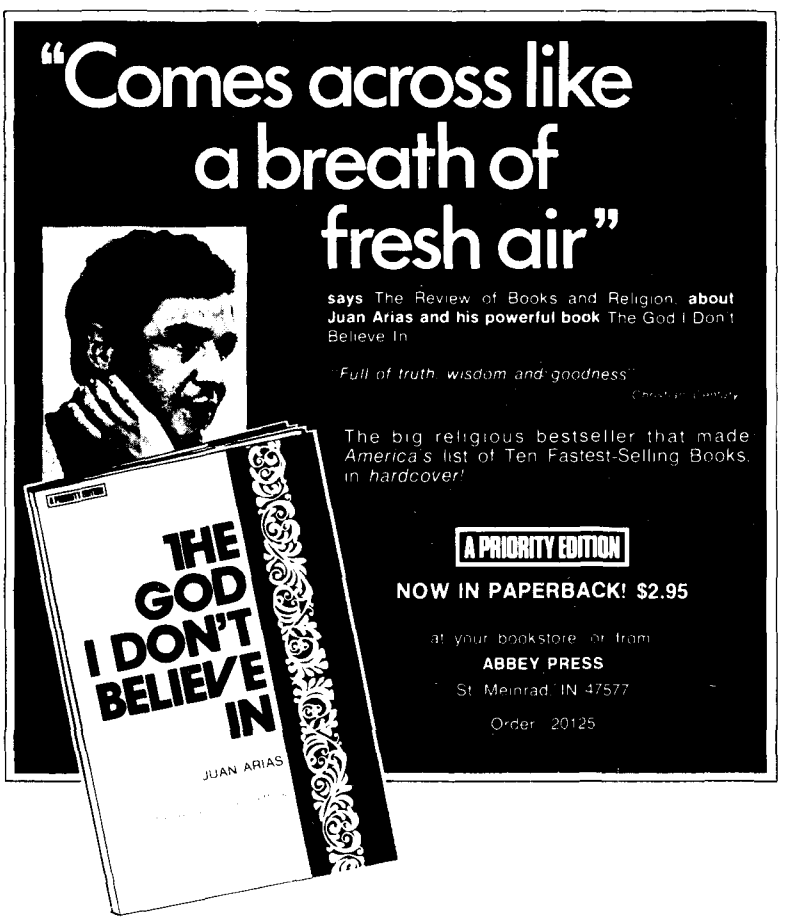
a civilized hospitality toward the literary life. But I suspect that my discomfiture at being asked to look back over the past year's reading may also be felt by many others, and not necessarily because of their misgivings about Matthew Arnold's highly "judicial" program. For, despite all the economic woes in the publishing industry, the Great Deluge it sponsors hurtles on at a dizzying rate, and, intimidated by it as we all are, the result is that we simply read too much, far more than we can actually make room for in the life of the mind. So things get jumbled together, to the extent of our finding any sort of stocktaking at the end of a year to be extraordinarily difficult. And thus, feeling this just now as acutely as I do, about all I can produce for *Commonweal*'s Christmas List are a few notations on books by which—within recent weeks—I've been impressed.

Professional commitments require me to "keep up" with current publications in the world of theology and in that of literature and criticism (and the various ancillary disciplines). But, in the former field, I don't at the moment think of anything of the vintage of '74 that, off in a corner at a cocktail party with an agnostic stranger, I might be inclined to cite as exemplifying the power of (Christian) theological perspectives to deal arrestingly with contemporary experience in the context of the Western scene of our time. (Nothing, in other words, of the past year comes to mind as representing the toughness and cogency of vintage Niebuhr and Tillich and Bultmann.)

Nor am I particularly moved to commend any work of poetry or prose fiction of the past few months. Random House has just announced the first posthumous volume—*Thank You, Fog* ($5)—of its great poet, and since, in these years after Stevens and Eliot, we've needed to think of Auden as *the* master in our time of the English tongue (most especially in the work from *Nones* on), one awaits his last statements with especial interest, but I've not yet had a chance to see this book.

In the novel, it is, of course, Graham Greene, who is the last great surviving figure amongst those who followed "the generation of 1914," but his book of '74—*Lord Rochester's Monkey* (Viking, $15.95)—is not a novel. Nor is it really a book of the present year, for it was actually written over forty years ago; and, since the English censors couldn't then be expected to approve it, the manuscript was relegated to a desk drawer from which in due course it was removed to the library of the University of Texas, where it remained until he finally undertook a few months ago to arrange for its release. But now, though a work of his youth, it strikes us indeed as "vintage" Greene. For, in the life of the strange *débauché*, John Wilmot, second Earl of Rochester, who is one of the most fascinating poets of the English Restoration, this great "poet" in our own time of the Fall and the mystery of sin found while still a young man a subject pat to his purpose; and his account of how in the life of this seventeenth-century libertine, God helplessly fumbled at the latch is absolutely fascinating.

But, in the customary work of fictionists over the past year, I've found nothing especially captivating—apart from a wonderfully engaging novel that appeared several months ago, Robert M. Pirsig's *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance: An Inquiry into Values* (Morrow, $6.95). It recounts a trip by motorcycle that father and his eleven-year-old son undertake westward, from Minneapolis to Santa Rosa and the Bay. So, in its invasion of the great American hinterlands, it belongs to the mode of pastoral than which—from the time of Kerouac to the time of Brautigan—none would seem to be more centrally fixed in our recent fiction; and, given the charm of the narrative and the extraordinary cunning with which Mr. Pirsig makes his novel talk (in the way its sub-title promises) about this country's present condition and prospects, it is a little surprising that the book has gotten so mixed a press, being sometimes given large praise and sometimes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treated with a strangely bilious kind of carping. Yet, nonetheless, it runs such large risks in its broodings on the American soulscape as not to make altogether incredible George Steiner's comparison of it with *Moby Dick*; and it ought not to go unread.

In the field of criticism, the two books I've been most impressed by in recent months are Stephen Spender's *Love-Hate Relations* (Random House, $8.95) and Richard Gilman's *The Making of Modern Drama* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, $8.95)—though, whereas the latter is a splendid success, the former (despite its considerable interest) must be adjudged very largely a failure. Mr. Spender wants to take a very spacious historical perspective on the relations over the past hundred years between English and American literary culture. And, given his familiarity with the American situation (through numerous long periods of residence here) and the great breadth of his learning, it might have been expected that his book would be a kind of definitive statement. But, unfortunately, his writing is so pervasively marked by the predictable (though in his case surprising) malice of an English don toward American culture that the performance as a whole proves to be only another instance of what (as the title itself suggests) the trans-Atlantic venture has so often been for literary Englishmen—namely, an affair of "love-hate relations." Yet, as Spender ranges from the time of Emerson and Hawthorne to that of Dwight Macdonald and Norman Mailer, the very animus of the *reportage* produced by this gifted and fundamentally well-*intentioned* man makes an interesting case of how things are likely to go between ourselves and our friends in London and Sussex and Oxford and Cambridge—in a time when the manifestly greater vitality of literary and intellectual life in the States is perhaps bound to provoke bad temper (even in gentle men) on the other side.

Richard Gilman's book, however, is one for which I have nothing but praise. His charting of the movement of modern theatre from Büchner to Strindberg and from Ibsen to Chekhov and on to

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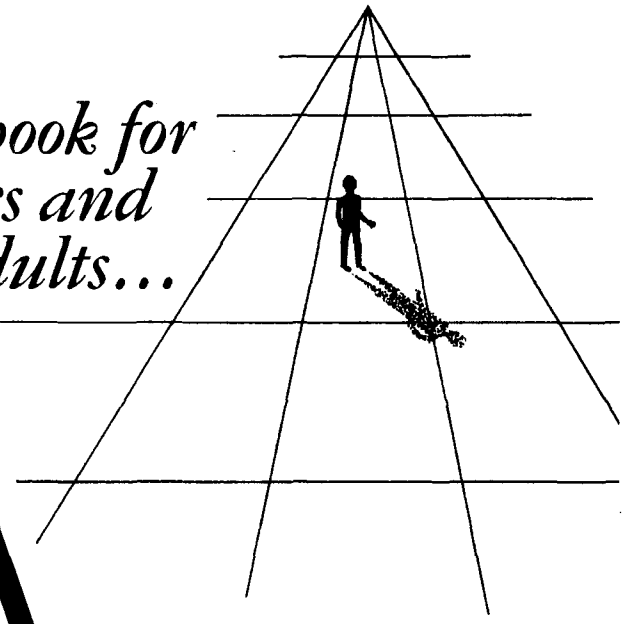

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Pirandello, Brecht, Beckett and Peter Handke makes the richest account of his subject in recent criticism. And his way of talking about how the modern playwright has undertaken to render and redeem the human reality strikes deeply into the whole spiritual situation of the age.

No doubt in part by reason of my own ancestral heritage, two other books of recent months have been for me at least deeply affecting. The first is Eugene Genovese's *Roll, Jordan, Roll* (Pantheon, $17.50), which is surely the most trenchant attempt any American historian has made at rendering the ante-bellum South from the perspective of the slaves. And, in its account of the cultural inventiveness and human resilience with which they reckoned with "the peculiar institution," it lays to rest conventional portrayals of slave life in terms of mere deprivation and "dehumanization": it is, indeed, I believe, a great feat of research and historical imagination that Professor Genovese has performed—and his book has been for me deeply moving.

Then there is one other book I would speak of which also rehearses American Negro experience in a very great way —a book called *All God's Dangers: The Life of Nate Shaw* (Knopf, $10), which was put together with tape recorder by Theodore Rosengarten. Mr. Rosengarten here seeks to make permanent the memories of a tough, proud, magnificently intelligent (though quite illiterate) black peasant of Alabama who died in his eighties in 1973, four years after Mr. Rosengarten had begun to record his account of how, through nearly nine decades, he managed to survive and to prevail—as a tenant farmer, as yeoman, as an organizer of the Alabama Sharecroppers Union in the early 'thirties; and as husband and father. Mr. Rosengarten's book is nothing other than Nate's story of his own life in his own words—and it is destined, I predict, to be one of the great testaments of American literature ("Oh, there's so much I remember till I just can't breathe it!").

GERARD S. SLOYAN

"One man's Mede is another man's Persian," George S. Kaufman is supposed to have said. Fortunately the editors of *Commonweal* don't ask you to name books anyone else might enjoy but only what you've been reading lately and liked. Mine may prove a dull catalogue, especially since the neighborhood bookseller tends to be the mailman (person-person?) bringing a package from Blackwell's rather than the clerk at Brentano's. There is no Brentano's near 23rd and Sansom in Philadelphia and I've never felt adult enough for the selection on nearby Market St.

Geza Vermes' *Jesus the Jew. A Historian's Reading of the Gospels* (Macmillan, 1974. $6.95) gave me pleasure and sent the adrenalin coursing through my system. The Hungarian-born Oxford professor presents himself as an historian of the Jesus of the gospels and has certain important tools for his historian's craft. These are chiefly an acquaintance with the full range of talmudic materials and the manuscripts from the Judaean desert. This close acquaintance with the extant Jewish literature of, or going back to, the time of Jesus puts the author ahead of the many scholars who knew their Maccabees, Alexander-cycle, Josephus, and Dead Sea scrolls but who in tracking down talmudic citations can scarcely be described as in control of the material. Vermes first examines the contemporary Galilean setting and certain Elijah-like charismatic figures in whose lineage he thinks Jesus is to be placed. Then he methodically examines the gospel titles for Jesus: prophet, lord, messiah, son of man, and son of God. The book is not as free of dogmatism as its author supposes. For a person who deals in religious myth he is strangely insensitive to the way it operated in the Christian church. Still, his work is provocative in the best sense. It lays out the linguistic evidence and the reader is free to choose. One is sufficiently put on notice, I should think, by a writer who is able to distinguish with absolute clarity between the psychology of religion and its history.

A fellow academic in England, John Bowker of the University of Cambridge, has done something more modest than Vermes and perhaps for that reason more satisfying. In *Jesus and the Pharisees* (Cambridge, 1973. $13.50) Bowker translates and edits 183 selections, many of them brief, from Josephus and the talmuds. While he hopes to illumine the passages in the gospels that refer to the pharisees, much else comes to light. A long introductory essay is especially helpful. One comes away feeling agnostic about the relation of the pharisees of the gospels and the *prushim* of the rabbinic literature but also with some sense of having identified the movement of the *hakamim* (wise men) which sought holiness for the common man through the Law. Bowker seems inclined to read the Marcan trial account straightforwardly, against most biblical critics.

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His suggestion, however, that in the opposition of priestly elements to Jesus we may have a case of the "insolent man in a complicated case" (suggested by Leviticus 17:8-13) is not without merit.

Jews and Arabs. Their Contacts through the Ages by S. D. Goitein (7th printing; Schocken Paperback, 1974. $2.45) is the kind of book one should have read years ago—nineteen, to be exact, when it first appeared. It tells how the Jews turned from agriculture to being a merchant and artisan nation in the "bourgeois revolution" of the 19th century; of the days when Arabic was the chief language of most Jews except for synagogue service; and of the part the domestication of the camel played in creating a separate Arab people from their northern neighbors. One can learn that Medina was a Jewish priestly town well before Muhammads flourished there and that the earliest stratum of the Koran was patterned on the Torah only, while a knowledge of Jesus and the Baptist (derived from apocryphal Jewish-Christian sources) came later. There are many historical indications in these pages as to why Jews and Arabs are so similar in some areas, so dissimilar in others. The final strain came with the unpremeditated upsurge of Zionism and Arab nationalism on almost identical schedules early in this century; even to the foundations of the Hebrew University and Cairo University in 1925.

A most informative recent book is *The Jewish Catalogue. A Do-It-Yourself Kit* compiled and edited by Richard Siegel and Michael and Sharon Strassfeld (Jewish Publication Society of America, 1973. $5.50), which features whole-earth being Jewish. It's a pretty serious business and I hope the absence of Leo Rosten's *The Joys of Yiddish* (Pocket Books, $1.95) reflects only a decision to omit a section on Yiddish language and literature. I rather doubt it.

I thoroughly enjoyed Abigail McCarthy's *Private Faces, Public Places* (Curtis, $1.50) and Frank Mankiewicz's *Perfectly Clear: Nixon from Whittier to Watergate* (Popular Library, $1.75). The latter documents Dick Tuck's visual gags in full but Tuck's Mexical laundry truck can't top Rosten when he starts to tell about the *nextdooriker* who . . .

MICHAEL TRUE

The five most memorable books of the past year, for me, all appeared somewhat unexpectedly, through people I met or through direct confrontation. For the most part, in other words, they have chosen me.

Margaret Hope Bacon's *I Speak for My Slave Sister* (Crowell, $5.50), written primarily for young readers, is the first full-length study of Abby Kelley Foster (1811-1887), the great Massachusetts abolitionist, pacifist, and feminist. A reporter for the New Haven *Record* once described her in this way: "Abby Kelley is a Quakeress, about 25 years, distinguished by her effrontery in practically asserting the right of her sex to an equal place with men." Her presence at an anti-slavery meeting prompted a man to say: "I had enough of woman control in the nursery. Now I am a man, I will not submit to it, . . . I will not sit in a meeting where women are allowed to speak and vote." Abby Foster's struggle for freedom for herself and others is one of the more remarkable stories in American history, waged with the help of her husband, Stephen S. Foster, author of that shocking anti-slavery best-seller, *The Brotherhood of Thieves; or a True Picture of the American Church and Clergy* (1843).

Among several exceptional collections of poetry, John Beecher, *Collected Poems, 1924-1974* (Macmillan, $8.95) occupies a special place. As troubadour poet of protest and prophecy, he has helped restore poetry to its proper place in the public forum over the past fifty years, proving by word and example, as he says in the prefatory note: "Poetry can save your life." The verse language is simple and direct, especially effective in recounting Beecher's experiences as a steelworker

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in the Thirties and as a Civil Rights activist in the Fifties. My favorite poem, however, is "Engagement at the Salt Fork," written during the San Francisco to Moscow Peace Walk in 1961, which conveys a note of confidence and warning in regard to the American experience at mid-century: "I could not sleep for pride / in these my people, still square-shooters, still / ready to tote fair with the other man. / I could not sleep for sadness too, to think / how these great hearts are gulled with lies. / God help the liars when my people wake!"

The relationship between politics and poetry is the subject also of James F. Mersmann's *Out of the Vietnam Vortex: A Study of Poets and Poetry Against the War* (Kansas, $10.50). It includes general discussions of poetry from World Wars I and II, and from the ongoing Indochina war, as well as informed sensitive readings of poems by Allen Ginsberg, Denise Levertov, Robert Bly, and Robert Duncan. Mersmann generally accepts Galway Kinnell's suggestion that "all poetry is rightly political just as all poetry is religious because it attempts to break through, rend, or transcend the barriers and veils that separate people from one another and from the divine." By doing so, he is able to hear what is happening in contemporary poetry in a way that few critics do and to recognize its full originality and beauty.

Another important contribution to understanding and appreciating contemporary poetry is Denise Levertov's *The Poet in the World* (New Directions, $2.45), occasional essays on poets, poetics, pedagogy, and politics. After living with it for almost a year, I am more convinced than ever that Levertov's collection of criticism will take its place beside Eliot's *The Sacred Wood* and Pound's *ABC of Reading* as an indispensable guide to modern aesthetics. She speaks with simplicity, authority, imagination, in the idiom of her time.

My nomination for the year's most neglected book (which, to my good fortune, found its way to my door) is Thomas A. Shannon's *Render Unto God: A Theology of Selective Obedience* (Paulist Press, $4.50), with a Foreword by Gordon Zahn. According to Professor Shannon, the role of the citizen, as defined by Catholic tradition, has been largely passive, emphasizing the prior right of authority—sacred or secular. Modern Church teaching has begun to challenge that tradition, however, with assistance from John XXIII, Jacques Maritain, John Courtney Murray, and others. Shannon cites specific cases (Bad laws, after all, *should* be disobeyed!) and provides theological background for a doctrine of selective obedience, particularly within the context of American society. In doing so, he makes a valuable contribution to our understanding of Church-State relations as they apply to the individual conscience.

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Abigail McCarthy (Cont.)

ceeded by Tomic, who is more committed to radical change and more a man of the workers, might have managed a pace of change which would have satisfied the most desperate. As it was, both were made vulnerable to the charge of being tools of the Colossus to the north.

Yet the dilemma is real. Should we have refrained from helping Frei, from insuring his success? Powerful international forces were helping his opponents of the right and left. Yet with the bitter wisdom of hindsight he thinks so now. We are left to ask: How can we exercise our moral obligations to our neighbors of the globe whose future is interwoven with ours, and still not intrude in such a way that that natural and historical process is wrenched askew? Surely not by turning our backs or shirking responsibility. We must listen and learn—quickly.

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Theology

Godfrey Diekmann, O.S.B., Louis Bouyer and Dr. Paul Minear are three of the visiting professors for the Spring Term, 1975, Department of Theology, Catholic University, Washington, D.C. Contact: Fr. James Coriden, Department of Theology, CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY, Washington, D.C. 20064.

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CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 227)

university. The seminarian can be as isolated in that atmosphere as he ever was under the "old system." Given the fragmentation of the modern university, there follow no necessary benefits from a move to a university campus.

Finally Catholics should learn from the Protestant situation. There are excellent divinity schools both on and off the university campus. Catholics should encourage and support a strong academic and professional seminary system, both at the university level and separate. Each has its unique advantages. But to substitute a university system for the old separate system, is to be as rigid under the guise of liberalism as the old system ever was. When will Catholics learn that to substitute one authoritarianism for another is no gain? We should rather encourage the development of distinctive, pluralistic schools.

BERNARD B. SCOTT
Associate Professor of New Testament
Saint Meinrad Seminary

CRITICS

THOMAS E. CRONIN, writer-in-residence at the Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies, is the author of *The State of the President* (Prentice-Hall).

ANNE FREMANTLE's most recent book is *George Eliot* (Haskell Publishers).

JOHN HEIDENRY is a free-lance writer and critic living in St. Louis.

THOMAS POWERS, 1971 Pulitzer Price recipient for national reporting, is the author of *The War at Home* (Grossman).

NATHAN A. SCOTT, JR., professor of theology and literature at University of Chicago, is the author of *Three American Moralists: Mailer, Bellow, Trilling.*

FATHER GERARD S. SLOYAN of Temple University's religion department is the author of *Jesus on Trial* (Fortress).

MICHAEL TRUE is chairman of the English Department at Assumption College in Worcester, Mass.

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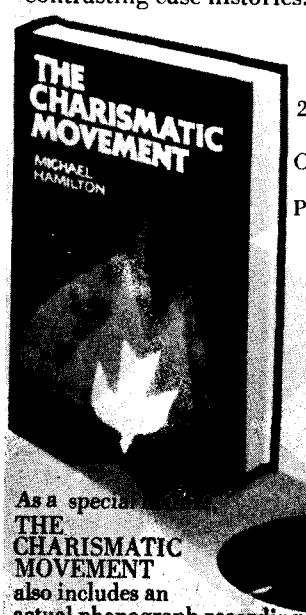

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